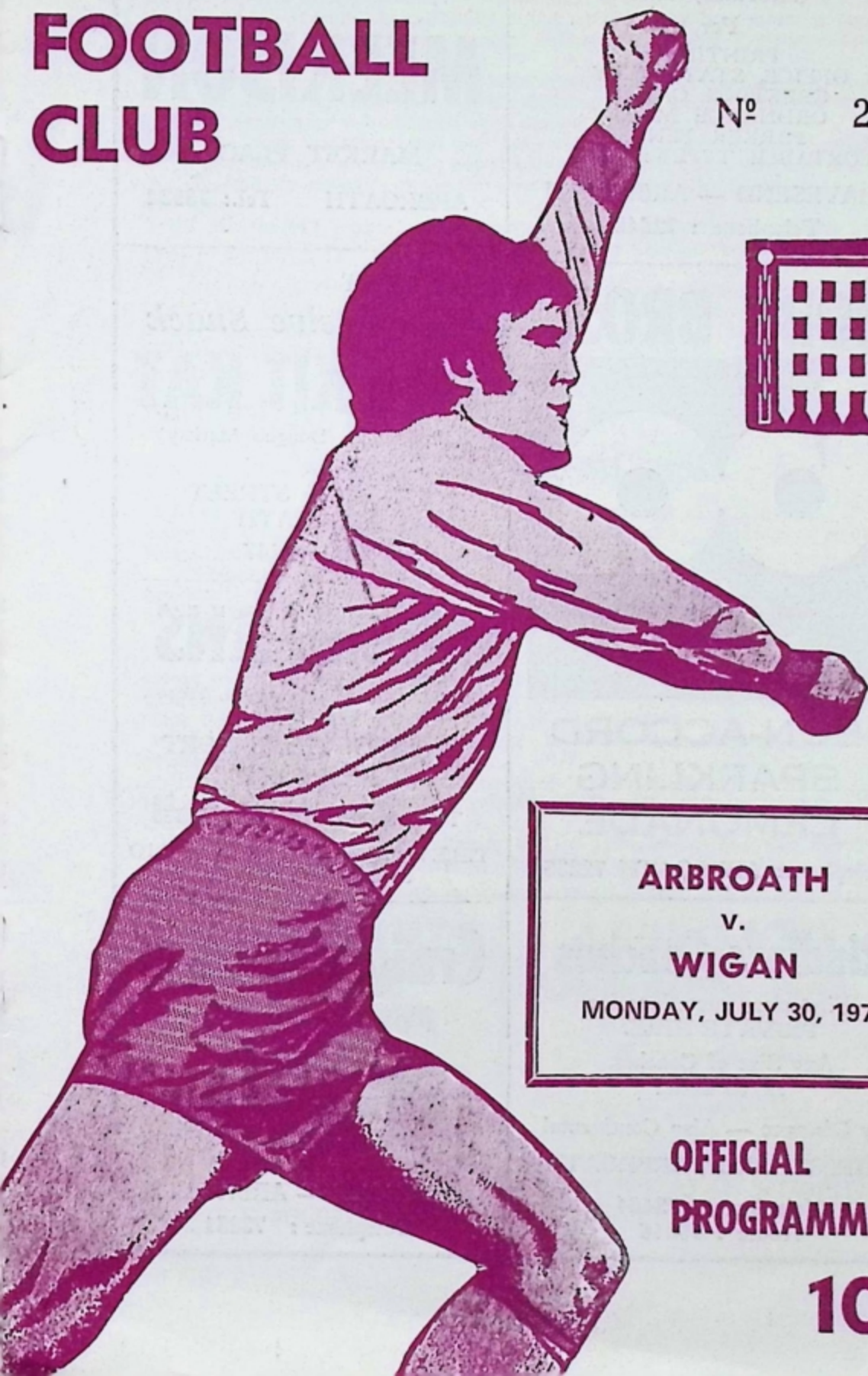


ARBROATH

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CLUB**

Nº 237



ARBROATH

v.

WIGAN

MONDAY, JULY 30, 1979

**OFFICIAL
PROGRAMME**

10p

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BERT HENDERSON SAYS....

The club welcomes our members and fans back to Gayfield Park for the start of another season for today's match with Wigan Athletic F.C., and a Forfarshire Cup game against Dundee United on Thursday, more or less completing our pre-season preparations before our opening League match with Hearts F.C. on the 11th August.

We have quite a start to the season with full-time outfits providing the opposition in our first four matches in League and League Cup and this should certainly give an indication as to our prospects for this term.

I am quite confident that our lads will acquit themselves well, and despite our reputation for being notoriously slow starters, and who can deny this, we will be nobody's pushover whether the opposition is full-time or part-time.

I ask for full support for our players from our members and fans in every game, and can promise in return 100% effort from all concerned within the club.

We welcome this evening our visitors from Wigan, managed by my old friend, Ian McNeill. The English Fourth Division side have a very good season behind them just failing to make promotion to the Third Division and are sure to resume their challenge this year and we wish them well and look forward to a good entertaining game.

TONIGHT WE WELCOME....

WIGAN ATHLETIC

For what is the curtain-raiser to the new season here at Gayfield we are happy to extend a warm welcome to the officials, manager and players of Wigan Athletic Football Club for this friendly match.

Newcomers to the English League last season, Wigan, under manager Ian MacNeil, gave every indication that they are bound to be a force to be reckoned with in the coming season.

Taking their place in the Fourth Division, they surprised many of the soccer pundits with some scintillating displays that in the later stages of the season took them onto the fringe of the promotion race. It was not to be a completely fairy-tale start to life for the club however, although their efforts made sure of putting Wigan firmly onto the football map.

And in a town that is possibly better known for its exploits in the world of rugby football, that is quite a feat.

Most of the players who did so much in last season's push for glory will very likely be on show this evening, and we take this opportunity of introducing them to you.

Vying for the goalkeeper's jersey will be John Brown and Bob Ward. The former was Wigan's last line of defence last season having seen service

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previously with Preston and Stockport County, and he gave stability and experience to a defence already noted for its difficulty to break down. The latter was signed during the summer on a free transfer from Blackpool, moving there from West Brom for £20,000.

In defence, one name which some of our many fans may remember, is that of Noel Ward, who moved south to Wigan from Aberdeen. As club captain last season, he gave his team mates a positive lead to such good effect that he attracted the attention of First Division clubs and was a member of the Northern Ireland squad for their game against Bulgaria. A frequent goalscorer, he has gone from strength to strength since his Pittodrie days.

Others to watch for are Kevin Smart, a gritty player who always gives 100 per cent effort wherever he plays; Neil Davids who is a strong, rock-like figure at the heart of the defence; David Fretwell whose vast experience was a big asset to the club last season, and Joe Hinnigan, a 23-year-old, who is already interesting bigger name clubs who are no doubt impressed by his ability to snatch vital goals as well as his cool, defensive play.

In the engine room we can expect to see the lively Tommy Gore and Jeff Wright who were both ever presents last term. Tommy in fact was chosen as the Wigan Supporters' Player of the Year and endears himself to the Wigan faithful by his forceful shooting. Jeff, on the other hand, is one of the most gifted ball distributors in the Fourth Division and is a consistent performer against any opposition.

Strong running Frank Corrigan and former Ross County player George Urquhart, signed recently for a nominal fee, make up this vital department of the Wigan team's make-up.

But if, as hoped, there are a few goals tonight, it's very likely to be the forwards who take the eye, and certainly coming into this category are Micky Moore, Peter Houghton and Derek Brownbill. All three are aggressive, hard working players, with a penchant for grabbing goals, and are invaluable players to the club.

Another Wigan hero, often named "The Magician," is winger Ian Purdie, who previously played in Scottish League football with Dundee, Aberdeen and Motherwell, and our full backs could have a tough task on their hands in keeping tabs on him.

But for some of our fans of a little longer standing, one name to ring bells will be that of John Wilkie who, of course, is himself a former Arbroath player.

John, who was a prolific scorer in non-league football, made only six appearances last season but is expected to push hard for a more regular place this time around. Another in much the same category is young Alan Crompton.

All in all it is a formidable line-up and Manager Ian MacNeill, who played with Aberdeen as a youngster, and later for Leicester City, Brighton and Southend, has already achieved miracles on a tight budget.

Now comes the really acid test. Having done so well last time, they'll be expected to improve upon it, and who knows it could be Third Division football before very long.

We certainly wish them well in their quest towards that.

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GAYFIELD GOSSIP

After tonight's match, fans should remember that on Thursday we are scheduled to meet Dundee United in a Forfarshire Cup-tie here at Gayfield, kick-off 7.30. The match is a first round tie in this season's competition.

There are still a limited number of "big value" season tickets available from club treasurer Mr George R. Potter, and our young fans should be sure to persuade their dads to invest. Remember boys, everyone of you who holds a season ticket will, on a rota basis, be made guests of the club at matches throughout the coming season. The first lucky lads will be announced shortly.

August looks like being a hectic month for the club, and fans should note our games during this period. On Saturday the 11th, we play Hearts in the opening First Division match of the season. On the 15th we travel to Aberdeen for the first round, first leg of the League Cup, followed on the Saturday (18th) with a league visit to Motherwell. The 22nd brings Aberdeen to Gayfield for the return leg of the Cup-tie, then it's back to the bread and butter of the league campaign with a visit from St Johnstone. There are a few games there to whet the appetite of football lovers in the area.

During the close season a lot of work has been going on towards promoting the club to greater effect than ever before. To this end free car stickers with the slogan "Don't Follow Me, Follow Arbroath F.C." are now available at Gayfield, and starting from the league game with Hearts, a new and brighter club programme will be on sale at home matches.

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Mr DAVID F. MacKECHNIE

In this, our first programme of the new season, it is only fitting that we pay tribute to Mr David F. McKechnie who died during the close season.

A highly respected and well-known member of the community in Arbroath, Mr McKechnie stood down from the position of chairman of the club at the annual general meeting in March after over a quarter of a century of service.

He was known in footballing circles not only locally but throughout Britain and during his eight years as chairman was one the club's most active ambassadors.

He became an official of the club 28 years ago, and his final year in the chair coincided with the club's Centenary Year celebrations.

Football was his over-riding interest and his pawky sense of humour and fund of stories endeared him to football officials, players and patrons at all levels.

New club chairman, Mr Ian Stirling, in paying tribute to his predecessor said, "Mr McKechnie's death is a very great loss, not only to Arbroath Football Club but to the community as a whole. My association with him goes back about 30 years and I count him as the first real influence in my football career."

Mr Wilfred Forrester, who retired from the position of vice-chairman of the club in March said, "David's period of office was one of the most fruitful in the club's history due to his unfailing good humour and diplomatic handling of all matters that arose.

"He was known, respected and held in high regard by every senior club in Scotland."

His presence at Gayfield will be missed.

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